International Business Mail Services
User Guide

1 January 2021

The economical way to send your letters abroad. A comprehensive guide to our Letters, Large Letters and our Mixed services.

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International Business Mail Services

International Business Mail is a range of services covering Letters, Large Letters and a mixture of post.

Examples of permitted items which often fall within these categories under International Business Mail include letters, direct mail, statements, catalogues, magazines, invoices and certain other goods.

What are 'Letters'?

A Letter is considered as anything that is:

- Over the size of 140mm x 90mm
- Under the size of 245mm x 165mm
- No more than 5mm thick
- Less than 100g in weight

What are 'Large Letters'?

A Large Letter for the purposes of International Business Mail is considered as anything that is:

- Over the size of 140mm x 90mm
- Under the size of 381mm x 305mm
- No more than 20mm thick
- Less than 500g in weight

Please note that where the term 'Letter', 'Large Letter' or 'Parcel' is used in this User Guide, the meaning given to those terms in the User Guide applies and not the meaning of 'Letter', 'Large Letter' or 'Parcel' as set out in the Royal Mail General Terms and Conditions.

Business Mail dimensions

	Letters	Large Letters	Mixed mail
Minimum size:	140 x 90mm	140 x 90mm	140 x 90mm
Maximum size:	245 x 165mm	381 x 305mm	Length + width + height ≤ 900mm. No single side must be ≤ 600mm.
Maximum weight:	100g	500g	2kg (unless printed matter)
Maximum thickness:	5mm	20mm	N/A

Items rolled up

The following dimensions are permissible:

Minimum: Length + (diameter x2) ≥ 170mm, (with the greatest single dimension 100mm).

Maximum: Length + (diameter x2) ≤ 1040mm, (with the greatest single dimension 900mm).

International Business Mail Services

Weight

The maximum weight for an individual item is 2kg. However, you can send books and pamphlets, i.e. any papers 'bound' together, up to 5kg. Items between 2kg and 5kg in weight, which contain books or pamphlets, must be marked 'Printed Papers' in the top left hand corner on the front of the parcel. You must not include personal correspondence with these items. Weight exceptions to the information above:

- Ireland – only books can be above 2kg up to the limit of 5kg
- Cambodia – no items above 2kg
- Canada – no items above 2kg.

What do we mean by 'Mixed'?

Mixed Mail is a fast, convenient and economical way to send your letters, large letters and parcels overseas. Fast, because it requires only a minimal amount of work by you; convenient because there is a choice of delivery speeds; and economical because it can save you money.

What are 'Parcels'?

A Parcel for the purposes of International Business Mail is anything that is:

- Not a Letter or a Large Letter
- The length plus the width plus the height is no greater than 900mm and no one single side is longer than 600mm
- For tubular packages, the length plus twice the diameter must not exceed 1040mm, and the greatest single dimension must not exceed 900mm
- No heavier than 2kg (unless printed matter).

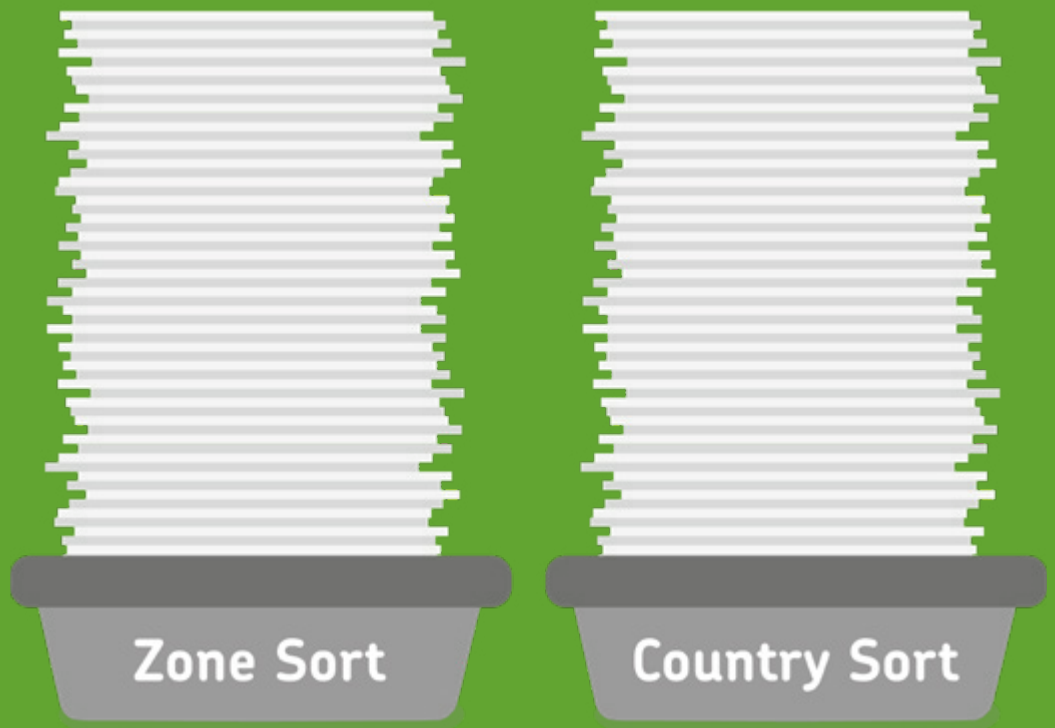
You can only send parcels under International Business Mail as part of a mixed mail posting. If you are just sending parcels with no other category of mail, you should use the International Business Parcels service.

Qualifying criteria

To qualify for these services you will need to spend in excess of £5,000 (£10,000 for Max Sort) per annum across the International Business Services portfolio. Further details are set out in the Specific Terms for International Business Services.

This User Guide forms part of the operational terms referred to in the Royal Mail General Terms and Conditions.

Your options



Your options

This User Guide shows how International Business Mail works for the Zero Sort, Zone Sort, Country Sort and Max Sort options.
But if you have any questions you can find out more at royalmail.com/internationalbusinessmail

International Business Mail offers you a number of options for presenting your business mail. These range from handing over a tray or bag and letting us do everything else, to sorting it into different zones, countries or destinations (which will save you money).

Your options are:

Zero Sort Premium

With Zero Sort Premium, all you need to do is put your international mail in a mail bag with a consignment note. It's as simple as that.

You don't need to count, segregate or individually weigh it – we'll do all this for you. All you need to do is make a note of the number of bags on the consignment note. We can also apply the necessary mail indicia, a UK return address and bill by department if required – it's that flexible. We then send it by our fastest speed.

So if you want your mail delivered swiftly, but don't want the hassle of all the usual administration that goes with it, Zero Sort Premium is the service for you. Zero Sort Premium is only available if you choose the Business Mail Mixed option.

For more detailed information about Zero Sort Premium please see page 21.

Zero Sort

This option has two different delivery speeds – Priority and Economy.

It is designed to save you money by separating your International Business Mail by service speed – we'll do the rest.

You need to provide us with additional details (compared with the Zero Sort Premium option) about your daily mail by counting and weighing that day's mail and completing the necessary documentation.

Zone Sort

Zone Sort offers a cost saving when you separate your mail into three selections: EU, Rest of World Zone A (USA), Rest of World Zone B.

For details of which countries fall within the European Union, please see the Service Specific section in this User Guide.

For more detailed information about Zero Sort and Zone Sort, please see page 23.

Your options

Country Sort

This option requires you to pre-sort your mail into country order and present it to us in this way. In return you benefit from pricing by country.

With Country Sort you have two further sub-options depending on the volume of mail sent:

→ Country Sort Low Volume, minimum quantities per posting:

- Letters, 1,000 items per posting

- Large Letters, no minimum volume

Items are to be presented by service speed (ie Economy / Priority) and we either collect (free for customers who qualify under our Business Collections Service) or you can deliver to your local Mail Centre.

For more detailed information about Country Sort Low Volume please see page 23.

→ Country Sort High Volume; where the minimum volume is 4,000 Letters or 1,000 Large Letters per posting unless the posting is combined with a UK sorted bulk mail service i.e. Advertising Mail™, Publishing Mail or Business Mail, when the minimum quantity is 50 Letters or 10 Large Letters per service speed. All High Volume postings are handled by our Regional Distribution Centre Network. We will either collect (free of charge) or you can deliver to the Regional Distribution Centre.

For more detailed information about Country Sort High Volume please see page 25.

Max Sort

This option offers a cost saving for customers who sort their mail by destination. A destination is the location where we hand your mail over to the domestic postal authority. For many countries this is a single point but for some countries there are multiple destinations.

You need to present by category of item (Letters, Large Letters, although to some countries it is possible to mix categories including parcels). If the letters or large letters contain items classed as 'Goods' then these will need to be sent as parcels (this only applies to certain countries).

Max sort requires a minimum bag weight of 1.5kg per destination, per category.

For more detailed information about Max Sort please see page 32.

Your options

Service Summary

Service	Sorting options	Delivery speed	Indicia required	Sorting required	VAT applied	Documentation required	Machinable	Min volume per posting
Mixed	**Zero Sort Premium**	Priority	✔ (or we can apply it)	None	Zero Rated	Consignment Note	Optional	None
Mixed, Letters, Large Letters	**Zero Sort**	Priority	✔	None	Zero Rated	Sales Order	Optional	None
		Economy	✔	None	Zero Rated	Sales Order	Optional	None
Mixed, Letters, Large Letters	**Zone Sort**	Priority	✔	EU / ROW Zone A or Zone B	Zero Rated	Sales Order	Optional	None
		Economy	✔	EU / ROW Zone A or Zone B	Zero Rated	Sales Order	Optional	None
Letters & Large Letters	**Country Sort Low Volume**	Priority	✔	Presented in country order†	Zero Rated	Sales Order	Compulsory	1,000 for Letters No minimum for Large Letters
		Economy	✔	Presented in country order†	Zero Rated	Sales Order	Compulsory	
Letters & Large Letters	**Country Sort High Volume**	Priority	✔	Presented in country order	Zero Rated	Sales Order	Compulsory	4,000 Letters*/ 1,000 Large Letters*
		Economy	✔	Presented in country order	Zero Rated	Sales Order	Compulsory	
Letters & Large Letters	**Max Sort**	Priority	✔	Bagged and sorted to mail handover point	Zero Rated	Sales Order	Optional	Min bag weight 1.5kg, per handover point
		Standard	✔		Zero Rated	Sales Order	Optional	
		Economy	✔		Zero Rated	Sales Order	Optional	

** Unless the international element of the mailing is combined with a UK pre-sorted service.* *† Not required for Large Letter format when using a shipping solution.*

At the time of going to print this document is based on the Government's current advice, that the UK is leaving the EU Customs Union on 31st December 2020. For items being sent to the EU, the VAT treatment is expected to change to zero rated (currently they are subject to VAT at 20%) These rules may be subject to change. Please keep up to date at royalmail.com/prices2021

Delivery speed options

Delivery speed options

There are generally two options available for International Business Mail: Priority and Economy (apart from where the Zero Sort Premium sorting option is used, where all mail will be sent as Priority, and where the Max Sort sorting option is used – see table below).

Delivery aims

Service	Europe	ROW Zone A & B
Priority	3 – 5 days	6 – 7 days
Standard*	N/A	14 – 21 days
Economy	10 – 15 days	6 – 12 weeks

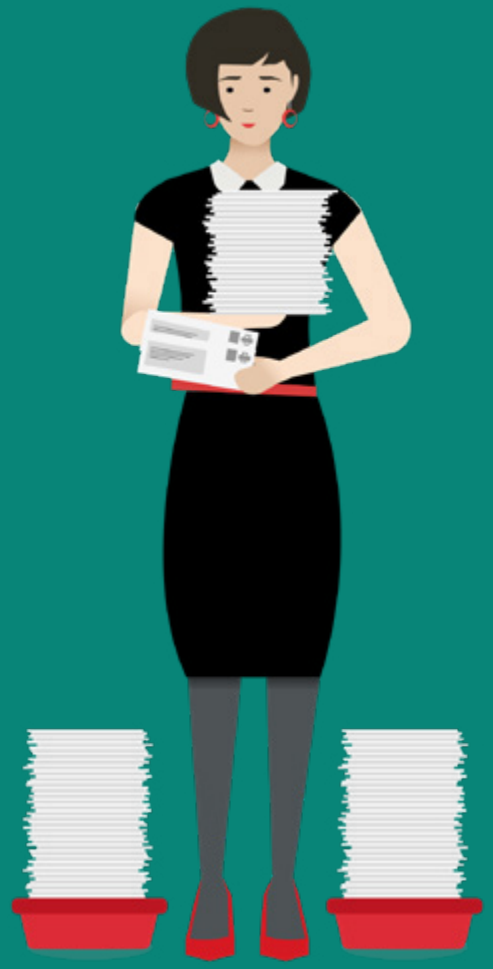
*Please note: All figures are in working days (Monday-Friday) except where weeks are stated and exclude the day of posting and bank holidays in both the UK and overseas. They also exclude any customs delays where applicable. *Only available with Max Sort*

Europe

To identify which countries we classify as Europe, please see the table below. Any countries not mentioned below are classed as Rest of World Zone A (USA) or Zone B (other countries):

Aland Islands
Albania
Andorra
Armenia
Austria
Azerbaijan
Belarus
Belgium
Bosnia & Herzegovina
Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark (inc Faroe Islands and Greenland)
Estonia
Finland
France (inc Monaco)
Georgia
Germany
Gibraltar
Greece
Hungary
Iceland
Ireland (Rep of)
Italy (inc San Marino and Vatican City)
Kazakhstan
Kosovo
Kyrgyzstan
Latvia
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Moldova
Montenegro
North Macedonia
Norway (inc Spitzbergen)
Poland
Portugal (inc Azores and Madeira)
Romania
Russian Federation
Serbia
Slovak Republic
Slovenia
Spain (inc Canary Islands)
Sweden
Switzerland
Tajikistan
The Netherlands
Turkey
Turkmenistan
Ukraine
Uzbekistan

Step-by-step guide



Step-by-step guide

This guide covers everything you need to know, from addressing your mail to despatching it.

Regardless of which option you choose, here are the steps you need to take, in order for us to get your mail where you want, when you want it there.

STEP 1

Getting ready

Check what you're sending

International Business Mail can be used to send personal correspondence or non-personal correspondence/goods.

Personal correspondence is for items sent and addressed to an individual. e.g. Letters, postcards, braille letters, individual invoices/statements. Items such as a university prospectus/brochures/catalogues sent with a personalised covering letter addressed to the individual enclosed.

Non-Personal Correspondence is for anything that does not fall into the category above and is purchased/sold/gifted/sent free of charge or is a sample – including periodicals, bulk sets of blank forms (such as invoices and statements), stationery, maps, books, posters, tickets to events, gift vouchers DVDs, CDs (with commercially created films, games, music and software) etc. The CN22 or CN23 must show a value according to customs rules. If there is a transaction value (i.e. goods are bought/sold) then that will normally be the value used – otherwise refer to valuation information on www.gov.uk

Prohibited and restricted items

There are certain prohibited items which you must not send and restricted items which may have conditions attached to their sending. What is prohibited or restricted varies from country to country, and can sometimes include apparently ordinary things. If you are unsure about anything, please royalmail.com/countriesAtoZ. Refer to the Royal Mail General Terms and Conditions provisions covering prohibited materials and restricted materials.

Dangerous items and substances

You must not send dangerous items and substances by any Royal Mail international service. Major classes of dangerous substances include explosive fireworks, gases, flammable liquids, toxic substances, corrosive chemicals, etc. Please note – aerosols cannot be carried in the postal network. Classifications of dangerous items and substances may change so visit royalmail.com/prohibitions

Check the size and weight of your items

Your items must fall within certain size and weight limits, as set out on page 3. Items that exceed these limits may be sent by Parcelforce Worldwide which is a separate service not covered by this agreement.

They can be contacted at parcelforce.com

Step-by-step guide

STEP 2

Preparing your mail

Address your mail

Please address your mail as clearly as possible, ensuring it is suitably wrapped. Royal Mail cannot accept unwrapped items of mail. Pages 40 and 41 show sample addresses for many countries. There are a few basic rules to follow to help us get your mail to its destination safely:

- All items must have a valid country on the last line of the address. This must be in English and not abbreviated (although USA is acceptable). There must be nothing else on the last line of the address apart from the country name
- The country should be in capital letters
- Many countries operate a postcode system. A valid postcode must be included in the address for these countries
- There should be a 'clear zone' of 5mm around the address, with no other information contained within the clear zone. If a window envelope is used, the address should be 5mm clear all round from the edge of the window
- It is acceptable for items to be poly wrapped.

For up to date information on acceptable address formats, visit upu.int

Return address

If you would like your undelivered items returned, please put your UK return address on each item and ensure there is a company identifier (e.g. company name or logo). We will return any undelivered items free of charge. A return address of any other country is not permitted according to UPU (Universal Postal Union) regulations.

We recommend you apply a UK return address to the outside of every item, however you must include a UK return address if you send over 1,500 items in a posting to a single country or over 5,000 items over a two week period to a single country. Your items may experience delays if you fail to apply a UK return address.

Each item must only display one delivery address and, if applied, one UK return address.

Do I need a customs form?

If you are sending an item outside of the UK or Northern Ireland it will need a customs form if it is either:

- An item of value
- Mail with a fulfilment or enclosure (non-personal correspondence).

For parcels up to and including a value of £270, attach a signed, completed CN 22 form (shown on the next page) to the front of the item. For parcels with a value over £270 use a CN 23 form in a plastic wallet (stock item code: SP 301).

At the time of going to print this document is based on the Government's current advice, that the UK is leaving the EU Customs Union on 31st December 2020. A customs declaration (CN22 or CN23) is required for items being sent to the EU These rules may be subject to change. Please keep up to date at royalmail.com/brexit

Step-by-step guide

On both forms you will need to sign to certify that the item does not contain any dangerous articles, prohibited by postal regulations (you are responsible for checking this).

S10 Barcode and tracked export goods

All items containing items of non-personal correspondence/goods, including for EU destinations, also need a Universal Postal Union (UPU) compliant S10 barcode. For tracked export goods, you will also need a 2D barcode.

Electronic Customs Data

If you are sending an item that needs a CN 22 or CN 23, the item will also need to be accompanied with the following electronic information:

- Sender details (name, address, and if available, telephone number);
- Recipient details (name, address including destination country, and if available, telephone number and e-mail);
- Item details (an accurate and concise description of goods, quantity, weight and value – with each commodity shown as a separate line entry);
- Harmonised System (HS) Trade Tariff code;
- Country of origin of contents, which refers to where the goods were produced or assembled and
- The amount of postage paid and, separately, any other charges (such as insurance costs)

Please visit **royalmail.com/electronic-customs-data** or contact your Royal Mail Account Manager for any queries or, if your query relates to shipping platform specifications in particular, contact **shippingsupport@royalmail.com**

We have updated our shipping systems – Click & Drop® Pro Shipping – and the specifications in our Customer Own Shipping Solutions (COSS) guide to help you provide this data electronically to us.

Example CN 22 – For use with items up to a value of £270

CUSTOMS DECLARATION
DÉCLARATION EN DOUANE
CN 22
May be opened officially
Peut être ouvert d'office
Great Britain/Grande-Bretagne Important! See instructions on the back
Gift/Cadeau
Documents
Commercial sample/Échantillon commercial
Other/Autre Tick one or more boxes
Quantity and detailed description of contents (1) Quantité et description détaillée du contenu
Weight (in kg)(2) Poids
Value (3) Valeur
For commercial items only
If known, HS tariff number (4) and country of origin of goods (5)
Total Weight Poids total (in kg)(6)
Total Value (7) Valeur totale
I, the undersigned, whose name and address are given on the item, certify that the particulars given in this declaration are correct and that this item does not contain any dangerous article or articles prohibited by legislation or by postal or customs regulations.
Date and sender's signature (8)

Example CN 23 – For use with items over a value of £270

CUSTOMS DECLARATION
CN 23
DÉCLARATION EN DOUANE

Customs declarations templates can be downloaded from royalmail.com/customs

Who pays customs duty?

Customs charges are the responsibility of the recipient. For current rates and categories, please contact the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills on **0207 215 5000**.

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Step-by-step guide

Printed Postage Impression (PPI) and Airmail Indicators

Please note: This section (both PPI and Airmail) may not apply to Mixed Mail sent under the Zero Sort Premium option. If you are using any other sorting option then you must include a PPI on all mail items.

Printed Postage Impression (PPI)

You must print or stamp the PPI onto the envelope or label in the top right hand corner. If using a shipping solution this all relevant indicators are included in the label.

Each PPI design has its own design specification that has to be followed and is made up of two elements:

→ The delivery speed indicator

→ The 'Delivered by Royal Mail' mark.

You can choose not to include the 'Delivered by Royal Mail' mark within the PPI, but you must have a delivery speed indicator and the initials 'GB'.

Full details (including artwork) on PPIs are available at royalmail.com/ppi

Airmail indicator

If you are sending an item through the Priority service speed it must have either:

→ An Airmail indicator

→ An Airmail label.

To download Airmail artwork go to business.help.royalmail.com
You may also create your own indicator, provided the words Airmail, Par Avion or Prioritaire are used.

This should be positioned as close as possible to the top left hand corner on the front of the item.

Failure to apply an Airmail indicator or label will result in your items being delayed.

Items sent by either the Standard (applies to Max Sort only) or Economy service speeds must not have an Airmail indicator.

Step-by-step guide

STEP 3

Traying or bagging your mail

The International Business Mail services give you the option to present your Priority mail in either trays or mail bags. All Economy mail has to be presented in bags.

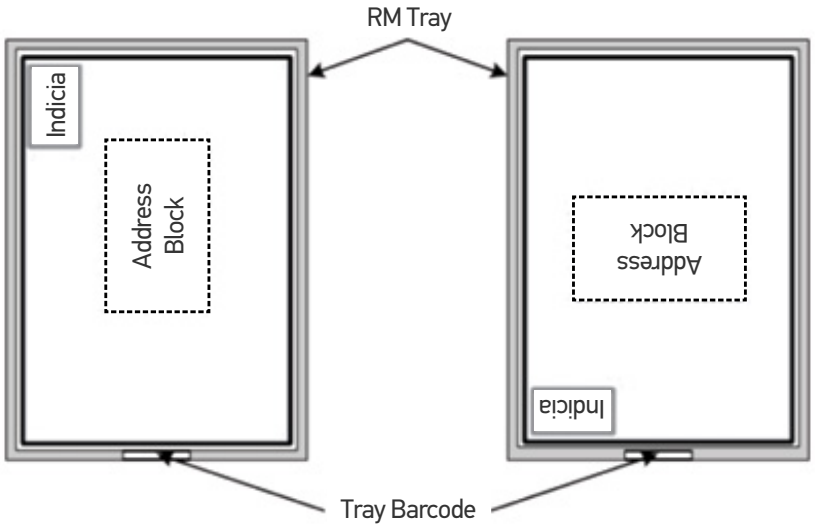
Address your mail

This is a fast, efficient method and keeps your mail in the best possible condition. Your items must be able to fit standing up on their longest edge inside the trays. Only Letters and Large Letters within the size limit described below can be placed in trays.

Letters in trays must be faced with the address nearest the uppermost edge. They must be orientated within the trays so that all items face towards the labelled end.

Large Letter items to a maximum size of 381mm x 305mm x 20mm may be placed in trays and must be faced with the address uppermost. They must be orientated within the trays as follows:

Landscape – face up and with the address away from the tray barcode and label.
Portrait – face up and with the address adjacent to the tray barcode and label.



You must also affix fully completed labels to the front of each tray using either a bag tie or elastic band. The maximum weight of a tray is 10kg, including the tray itself.

If using the Zone Sort sorting option, you must use separate trays to distinguish between EU, Rest of World Zone A (USA) or Rest of World Zone B Letters or Large Letters.

For Letters, when using the Country Sort sorting option, items must be sorted into alphabetical order by country into each tray with the earliest letters of the alphabet at the front. e.g. if a tray had mail for Austria to Germany in it then the Austrian items would appear at the front of the tray, where the bag label is affixed, and German items at the other end.

Step-by-step guide

For large letters, if you are not using a Royal Mail approved shipping solution, items must be sorted into alphabetical order by country into each tray with the earliest letters of the alphabet on top. e.g. if a tray had mail for Austria to Germany in it then the Austrian items would appear at the top of the tray and German items at the bottom.

NB: if you are using a Royal Mail approved shipping solution for Large Letters, presentation in alphabetical order is NOT required and mail may be presented by format, unsorted in bags / sleeved yorks.

Bags

Make sure all bags are sealed around the neck with a bag tie (stock item LN2). Max Sort bags must be sealed with a black tamper proof tie (stock item IDC01) and securely tied with a fully completed label attached. You must use grey (MB8) or opaque (MB10) mail bags, with the exception of mail sent under the Max Sort sorting option and by the Priority delivery speed (see page 32). The mail inside must be bundled and all face the same way with strapping or rubber bands used so that the bundles do not become loose in the bag.

If items are 'wedge-shaped', they should be counter-stacked with the top half of each item facing the opposite way to the bottom half of the adjacent item(s). Once bundling material is removed, items must be capable of being individually handled and must not be stuck to one another in any way.

The number of items in a bundle will depend on the item size and thickness. There is no minimum or maximum number of items in a bundle but the thickness of the bundle should not exceed that which can be held reasonably comfortably in one hand.

The Zone Sort sorting option requires you to present your bags sorted by EU, Rest of World Zone A (USA), Rest of World Zone B.

Country Sort, not created by a shipping solution requires the mail to be bundled in alphabetical country order within each bundle and where each bundle represents an alphabetical section of the overall posting, with the earliest letters of the alphabet on the top of the bundle. A bundle can contain several countries' mail provided they follow in alphabetical order. For example, if you are sending a posting to destination countries which include Albania, as the earliest alphabetically, and Zimbabwe as the latest alphabetically, and also includes mail to Germany and Hungary, there may be two bundles of mail where the first includes all mail to Albania through to Germany (in alphabetical order) and the second includes all mail from Hungary through to Zimbabwe (in alphabetical order).

If you are using a Royal Mail approved shipping solution for Large Letters, mail is presented by format, unsorted in bags/sleeved yorks.

Finally, a mail bag including all its contents must not weigh more than 11kg. Bags which are heavier than this will increase the risk of our staff suffering injury.

Please note: For the Max Sort sorting option, each bag must contain mail to one destination only. If you are sending to multiple destinations you will need to use at least one bag for each destination.

It is important you use the correct bag for the options required.
For specific instructions on bagging Max Sort items, see page 34.

Step-by-step guide

Traying or bagging options

Bagged options	Letters	Large Letters	Mixed
Zero Sort Premium	N/A	N/A	Yes
Zero Sort	Yes	Yes	Yes
Zone Sort	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country Sort	Yes	Yes	Yes
Max Sort	Yes	Yes	Yes

Traying options	Letters	Large Letters	Mixed
Zero Sort Premium	N/A	N/A	No
Zero Sort	Yes	Yes	No
Zone Sort	Yes	Yes	No
Country Sort	Yes	Yes	N/A
Max Sort	No	No	N/A

STEP 4

The paperwork

We recommend using an approved shipping solution to send your items of non-personal correspondence/goods/personal correspondence as it links to your Online Business Account (OBA) providing visibility of your shipments as well as creating the correct address and customs compliant labels and pre advice data. Your items will be docketed automatically. Visit **royalmail.com/electronic-customs-data**. Items that do not require a customs declaration can be sent via Online Business Account (OBA) without a shipping solution. When using OBA you must detail what you are sending online and then print a statement of mailing (unless you are using the Zero Sort Premium option for your mailing).

Online Business Account

Online Business Account (OBA) is a customer ordering facility available to all our account customers. OBA allows you to create sales orders electronically, it holds your mailing history so you can retrieve reports and export information to perform further analysis.

Benefits of OBA include:

- Streamlined ordering and online payment
- Easy, yet secure access to your records
- Fast and easy account management, all in one place.
- Integrates with Click & Drop, or our shipping API , COSS system or a 3rd party shipping solution.

For further information visit:
royalmail.com/business/parcels/shipping-solutions

Step-by-step guide

When using the Zero Sort (non-premium) and Zone Sort sorting options, but not accessing via a shipping solution, you will need to select the option and zone (if applicable) and input the number of items and the average weight. This does not apply for the Zero Sort Premium option. For further information, see page 21.

When using one of the Country Sort or Max Sort sorting options, but not accessing via a shipping solution, you must input into OBA the number of items and their average weight, for each country you are sending to, as the service offers destination specific pricing. We have created an OBA Data Generator which you can use to facilitate a quick and easy 'mail file upload' process. This is available for download from internationalmailtechnical.com

Work out the costs using the Rate Card

To calculate the cost of your mailing, please refer to the International Business Mail Rate Card. This can be downloaded from the document library at royalmail.com/internationalbusinessmail where you will also find the pricing calculator, which is available to download.

For details of the International Business Mail service codes refer to Appendix B on page 42.

STEP 5

Despatch

Collection

If you have a local daily collection of mail then your International Business Mail can be collected at the same time. Zero Sort Premium, Zero Sort, Zone Sort, Country Sort Low Volume and Max Sort mail must be posted into a Mail Centre, whereas Country Sort High Volume mailings will access our Regional Distribution Centre network. Therefore, Country Sort High Volume mailings must be kept separate.

If you need a collection, please visit royalmail.com/collections

Order more supplies

Once you've completed your mailing, you may need additional stocks of trays, bags, bag ties, labels, and customs forms ready for your next mailing. To re-order please visit royalmail.com/mailsupplies or you can order via Online Business Account – Mail Supplies. Delivery of stock is usually made within 72 hours.

For information on Max Sort please visit royalmail.com/maxsorthome

Specific features and requirements for your options

Specific features and requirements for your options

This section outlines some further details about the International Business Mail options available to you and other operational points.

Zero Sort Premium

Mail preparation and departmental billing

If you require us to apply the Printed Postage Impression, Airmail indicator and your return address or any combination of these, you must notify us of this when opening your account.

If you would like us to bill by department then you will need to:

a) Create your departments via our Online Business Account (OBA) system. OBA will then assign each department a numerical code.

For more information please visit royalmail.com/oba

b) Bundle your mail by department with the appropriate numerical code attached to each bundle.

Remember when sending printed material over 2kg to add the words 'PRINTED PAPERS'.

Polylopes

When preparing your posting, we highly recommend using our specially marked polylopes (order code P6590) first, for added security. If you use these, it is also recommended that you bundle your mail and arrange it so that all addresses face the same way and seal the polylope before placing it into our mail bags.

If you require departmental billing, use a polylope for each department and write or stamp the department number on the front in the space provided.

Bag labelling

Zero Sort Premium has its own unique bag label which you must use: bag label P5631C. If you are sending more than one mail bag in a mailing, mark the sequence number on each bag label (e.g. 1 of 5, 2 of 5, etc) and ensure you tick the appropriate boxes if you require our add-on services, as well as filling in the consignment note number.

Specific features and requirements for your options

Consignment notes

Once you have bagged and labelled your mail, you will need to fill out a consignment note (stock item P5084) for each collection.

Once completed, place the top copy note in the last bag. Tick the 'documents enclosed' box on the bag label to indicate the presence of the paperwork. Give the second copy to the Royal Mail collection driver.

Keep the third copy for your own records.

You must ensure that the consignment note number is also written on all bag labels in the mailing.

Please note: Wrong or missing paperwork may delay your mail and result in rework charges being applied to your account. We strongly recommend that you tell us the weight of your mailing on your consignment note for accurate billing and your own records.

Online Business Account (OBA)

OBA is a customer ordering facility for all of our account customers. With Zero Sort Premium, billing is done automatically with no need for you to input any data into the system. However, you can check your spend by accessing Online Business Account at royalmail.com/oba

Zero Sort, Zone Sort and Country Sort Low Volume

A few things to remember about Zero Sort, Zone Sort and Country Sort Low Volume:

- We recommend using an approved shipping solution to create the correct address and customs compliant labels and pre advice data. Visit royalmail.com/electronic-customs-data
- All mail items must have a Printed Postage Impression
- All items sent Priority must have an Airmail indicator or label applied
- Economy mail must not have an Airmail indicator or label
- Zone Sort Mail must be sorted into EU, Rest of World Zone A (USA), Rest of World Zone B.

EU countries are:

Austria
Belgium
Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark (except Faroe Islands and Greenland)
Estonia
Finland (except Aland Islands)
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Ireland
Italy (except Vatican City)
Latvia
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Netherlands
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Slovak Republic
Slovenia
Spain (except Canary Islands)
Sweden

Other destinations that sit within Europe but are VAT exempt and therefore can be sent as a Rest of World selection include:

Andorra
Gibraltar
San Marino

For a comprehensive list please visit:
hmrc.gov.uk/vat/managing/international

Letters and Large Letters machine processing criteria

You can further reduce your mailing costs by ensuring that Letters and Large Letters can be processed by our machines. This is an option for Zero Sort and Zone Sort services and applies to all Country Sort Low Volume postings. To benefit, all postings must follow the specification below.

- All items must be square or rectangular on the address face, without cover-mount, as rolls and irregular shapes are not permitted
- There must be a 'clear zone' of 5mm around the address, with no other information contained within the clear zone. If a window envelope is used, the address should be 5mm clear around the edge of the window
- The address must be in a font, size, colour that is capable of being read by our machinery, see Appendix C page 43 for further details
- Also, to ensure the quick and efficient processing of your mail, you must follow our addressing standards – see pages 40 and 41 for details

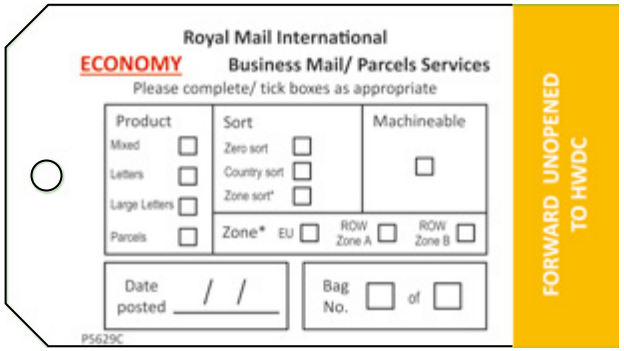
Zero Sort, Zone Sort and Country Sort Low Volume

- For Large Letters only, poly-wrapped items are allowed provided this specification is followed.
- Country Sort Letters Low and High Volume must be presented in alphabetical order by destination Country
- Country Sort Large Letters - when sent via a shipping solution do not have to be presented in alphabetical order.

Bag and tray labelling

Shown below are the labels which are required to be fully completed and attached to either a tray or mail bag for all postings:

Priority (P5627C)



Economy (P5629C)

Country Sort High Volume

Country Sort High Volume offers country-by-country pricing for customers sorting their mail into specific country order.

The table below indicates the requirements for a mailing to qualify as a Country Sort High Volume mailing.

Country Sort High Volume	Minimum volume when only international	Minimum volume when combined with UK pre-sorted service
Letters	4000	50
Large Letters	1000	10

E.g. a mailing of 3,950 domestic letters and 50 international letters would qualify.

The total of the combined UK and international mailing must be 4,000 Letter items or 1,000 Large Letter items. A combination of Letters and Large Letters cannot be counted together in this context.

There is one exception to the above: the UK pre-sortation service which requires customers to post a minimum quantity of domestic letters, independently of the number of Country Sort items cannot be taken into consideration.

When combining the UK and international elements to reach the minimum entry volume, then your international element of your mailing must be prepared and made available for collection at the same time as the domestic element.

In addition to the requirements already mentioned in the sections titled 'Address your mail' on page 13 and 'Addressing your business mail properly' in Appendix A on page 40, Country Sort High Volume letters must adhere to our 'Optical Character Recognition' OCR specifications. These are detailed in Appendix C on page 43 and Appendix D on page 44.

For Large Letters, the items must be flat and rectangular in shape, the address needs to be placed portrait and with the address placed to the upper centre on the item.

Mailing data required at time of posting

As already mentioned a sales order from OBA is required at the time of posting, however there a few more pieces of paperwork required. They are:

→ A computer planning report

→ A line listing.

Production of these can be easily facilitated by the OBA Data Generator.

Note: You can provide the Computer Planning Report and Line Listing in hard copy or electronic formats.

Country Sort High Volume

Computer Planning Report

The Computer Planning Report summarises your mailing and includes information such as customer details, overall volume, item weight, item format, job reference number, and the split between selections for Country Sort High Volume Priority and Economy. If you are using this service with UK sorted bulk mail services you can find more details on Computer Planning Reports [delete: are available] in the respective User Guide. To download a copy visit royalmailtechnical.com

The report can be tailored to suit your needs, however for mailings which contain both international and domestic elements, the Computer Planning Report must contain the information below. Mandatory information for Country Sort High Volume mailings is highlighted in bold:

- Name and address of the poster (agreement holder)
- **Posting date**
- **Account number**
- Service required – including the international service speeds
- Minimum selection size
- The format of the item – Letter or Large Letter
- Number of selections, the maximum is two selections for overseas (for domestic sorted bulk mail services, the number of direct and residue selections are required)
- **Number of International Bags** (for domestic sorted bulk mail products, the number of direct and residue bags)
- **Total items**
- **Total weight**
- Job reference number
- Percentage of mail fully and accurately postcoded for the UK. An example of a well-designed Computer Planning Report for a UK sorted posting, containing Country Sort High Volume mail with all the mandatory information is shown on the next page.

Country Sort High Volume

Example of a sorted bulk mail Computer Planning Report which includes international letters sent under the Country Sort High Volume option.

Company Name **Account Number** **Address Line 1** **Town** **Postcode**	**[Insert service name] and International Country Sort Letters** **Date:**			
(Insert sorted service name*)				
Minimum selection size				
Weight of item*				
Format*				
Job Reference Number*				
Royal Mail International Country Sort Letter				
Pre–sortation statistics				
Address records processed				
Postcodes matched				
Post towns matched				
Number suitable for Mail Sort				
Postcode statistics				
(% of address records processed)				
Full postcode				
Outward postcodes only				
Postcode level				
No postcode				

Company Name **Account Number** **Address Line 1** **Town** **Postcode**	**[Insert service name] and International Country Sort Letters** **Date:**			
Sortation statistics	**Number**	**Items***	**% Match**	**Bags***
Direct selections				
Residue selections				
Royal Mail International Country Sort Letters				
Totals				
Cost & Discounts				
Number of Mail Sort items				
Item weight (g)				
Postal rate (p)	p			
Straight line item cost	p			
Straight line item cost	£			
Direct selection discount				
(10551 items at XX%)	(£)			
Residue selection discount				
(10117 items at XX%)	(£)			
Mail Sort discounted cost	**£**			
TOTAL DISCOUNTED COST	**£**			

** Indicates all mandatory information.*

Country Sort High Volume

If sending a purely international mailing, the Computer Planning Report should contain the following information. Mandatory information is shown in bold:

- Name and address of the poster (business holder)
- **Date posted**
- **Account number**
- Service required – Priority or Economy
- The format of the item – Letter or Large Letter
- **Total number of item**
- **Total weight of mail**
- **Total number of bags**
- Job reference number.

An example of a well-designed Country Sort High Volume computer planning report is shown below:

Company Name **Account Number** **Address Line 1** **Town** **Postcode**	**[Insert service name] and International Country** **Sort Letters** **Date:**		
International Country Sort Letters			
Minimum Selection Size	50		
Format*	Letters		
Service Speed:	**Items**	**Weight (kg)**	**Bags**
Priority			
Economy			

** Indicates all mandatory information.*

Line Listing

In addition to the Computer Planning Report, you must provide a Line Listing and this must either precede the mailing or accompany it on its first collection.

You may find it useful to have more than one copy – you can keep one for your own records and use another to help you spot section breaks during production of the mailing.

Country Sort High Volume

The Line Listing should contain the following information. Items shown in bold must be included:

- Poster's company name
- **The date of the mailing**
- **Account number**
- Service Speed
- **Selection code: Priority is 99891 and Economy 99895**
- Selection name: International Priority / International Economy
- **Total items, weight and bags split by service speed – Priority and Economy for international mail**
- A cumulative total on each line for items and bags
- A subtotal for each five digit selection code.

How many copies do you need?

We recommend you produce three copies:

- One for your own records
- One for use on the production line, which may be written on and thrown away once the job is complete
- One to hand to us at the time of the first collection of the mailing, or beforehand where possible.

An example of a Standard Line Listing is shown below:

Standard Line Listing **Date:**

Company Name

Account Number

International Country Sort Letters

SSC*	Selection Name	Total Items*	Total Bags*	Total Weight*	Cumulative Items*	Cumulative Bags
99891	Priority					
99895	Economy					
Total						

** Indicates all mandatory information.*

Despatch of mail

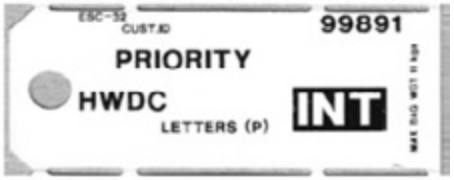
Once the mailing is ready to be despatched, your Letters or Large Letters can be handed over to us either in trays or bags.

To ensure you present your mail correctly, please refer to 'Step 3: Traying or bagging your Letters or Large Letters' on page 16.

The labels below must then be attached to the front of each tray or around the neck of a mail bag.

Country Sort High Volume

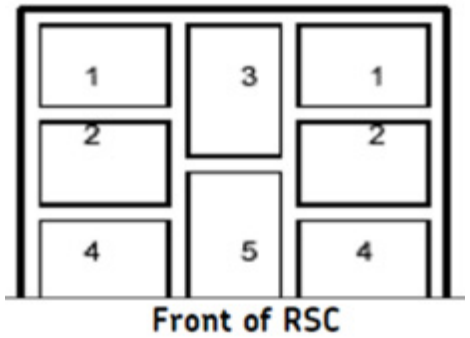
The next step is to load the trays/bags into RSCs – Rigid Stackable Containers (some areas of our network may offer Yorks – which are containers on wheels – as an alternative to RSCs).

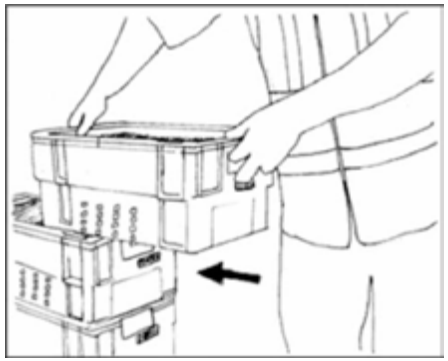


Loading trays in Royal Mail Rigid Stackable Containers (RSCs)

When loading trays in Royal Mail supplied RSCs, it is advisable to follow the instructions below. This will ensure that the trays are loaded in a manner that minimises health and safety handling issues and ensures ease of loading/unloading the RSC.

- Load trays following the layout shown in the diagram below, so that trays shown as '1' below are placed in the RSC first, followed by positions '2', '3', etc
- Load all the trays in a stack facing the same way round so they stand on top of each other
- Load the trays at the back of the RSC first. This should be done by walking into the RSC
- Where possible, please ensure that the trays at the top of each stack are full
- Slide the trays into place making sure that they are properly in place as shown in the illustration below:





Loading bags in Royal Mail Rigid Stackable Cages (RSCs)

Bags should be placed into RSCs.

Where small volumes of overseas mail are being posted as part of a domestic mailing i.e. one to five bags, these can be mailed in the same cage as the inland element. However larger volumes (more than five bags) must be presented in a separate RSC.

Next, you must place a Royal Mail cage card on each cage to identify the cage contents or attach it to a York (if Yorks are being used).

Country Sort High Volume

Cage cards are available from Royal Mail, please contact internationalservice@royalmail.com to place an order. An example of the international cage label, stock item P6395, is shown below:

A cage of International Business Mail may contain mail for different service levels – you can either use a separate cage card for each service speed or tick all relevant boxes on one cage card.

Royal Mail

INTERNATIONAL HIGH VOLUME CAGE CARD

POSTER:

CUSTOMER REFERENCE:

(PLEASE TICK WHERE APPLICABLE)

LETTERS ☐ LARGE LETTERS ☐ PARCELS ☐

CLASS	POSTING DAY/DATE
PRIORITY ☐	
ECONOMY ☐	

TITLE:

JOB NUMBER:

ACCOUNT NUMBER:

TO BE COMPLETED BY ROYAL MAIL

TIME AVAILABLE FOR COLLECTION:

Collections and Collection Receipts

We normally collect postings from you, by prior arrangement with your local RDC. Where the posting is a mixture of domestic and international items, the mailing must be available for collection at the same time.

When you contact your RDC to arrange a collection you must state whether there is an international element, and whether this includes a Priority selection (99891).

At the time of collection remember to submit the following pieces of documentation:

- Line Listing
- Computer Planning Report
- Statement of Mailing from OBA (this details the service, quantity and weight to each country)
- Customer Collection Receipt, an example of which is shown below.

Customer Collection Receipt

Customer Collection Receipt

A135001

Royal Mail

1. Poster Details

2. Collection Details

3. Posters comments

4. Driver's Information

Max Sort

By sorting and bagging your mail before handing it over to us you can qualify for our most competitive international rates while benefiting from Royal Mail's excellent quality of service.

Unlike the other International Business Mail options, this offers three speeds of delivery – Priority, Standard and Economy. First, you need to split your items into Letters or Large Letters. To some countries you may mix Letters and Large Letters together and to others you may mix Letters, Large Letters and Parcels together. See Appendix E for further details. You then need to sort your mail by destination and by service speed.

For a number of countries* Letters, Large Letters containing items of non-personal correspondence/goods must be sent as a Parcel, regardless of the items size and weight.

Personal Correspondence is an item sent to an individual. Letters, postcards, braille letters, individual invoices/statements. Items such as a university prospectus/brochures/catalogues sent with a personalised covering letter addressed to the individual enclosed.

Non-Personal Correspondence/Goods is anything that does not fall into the personal correspondence category above and is purchased/sold/gifted/sent free of charge or is a sample – including , periodicals, bulk sets of blank forms (such as invoices and statements), stationery, maps, books, posters, tickets to events, gift vouchers DVDs, CDs (with commercially created films, games, music and software) etc.

*Countries where this criteria applies are:

Australia	Japan	South Africa
Brazil	Malaysia	South Korea
Canada	Mexico	Taiwan
Chile	New Zealand	Thailand
China	Russia	Turkey
Hong Kong	Saudi Arabia	United Arab Emirates
Israel	Singapore	USA

To qualify for Max Sort you will need to spend a minimum of £10,000 per annum across the Royal Mail International Business Services portfolio. See the Royal Mail Specific Terms for International Business Services for further details.

Using the Sorting List

Once you have decided which delivery speed you want to send your mail by, you need to sort all items by their 'destination'. The 'destination' is the location where we hand your mail over to the domestic postal authority.

To do this, please refer to the International Max Sort Sorting Lists available at royalmail.com/maxsorthome. The sorting lists are divided into Priority, Standard and Economy sections, and then into regional zones (e.g. Western Europe, Africa & Asia). Countries are listed alphabetically within each zone.

Max Sort

The Sorting List tells you which areas or postcodes need to be sorted to a particular destination and which bag labels you need for that destination. Most countries have one handover point. However, larger countries such as USA have several 'destinations' based on the postcode/location on the item.

International Max Sort database

If you plan to sort your mail electronically you can ensure the accuracy of your mail sorting and increase the efficiency of your preparation by using the International Max Sort database.

Bagging your mail

Once sorted, all mail to each destination needs to go into a separate bag.

For each destination a separate bag must be used for each category of mail it is important you use the correct bag for the service you are using:

Priority
Use a blue airmail bag, marked MB 4GB.

Standard
Use a grey surface bag, marked MB8 or opaque MB10.

Economy
Use a grey surface bag, marked MB8 or opaque MB10.

To order mail bags please visit our website at royalmail.com/mailsupplies or for blue bags/Post Grip Bag ties and Max Sort bag labels email labels@royalmail.com

How much (and how little) can go in a Max Sort bag

You can put as many items in a bag as will fit, as long as the bag, labels, ties and its contents:

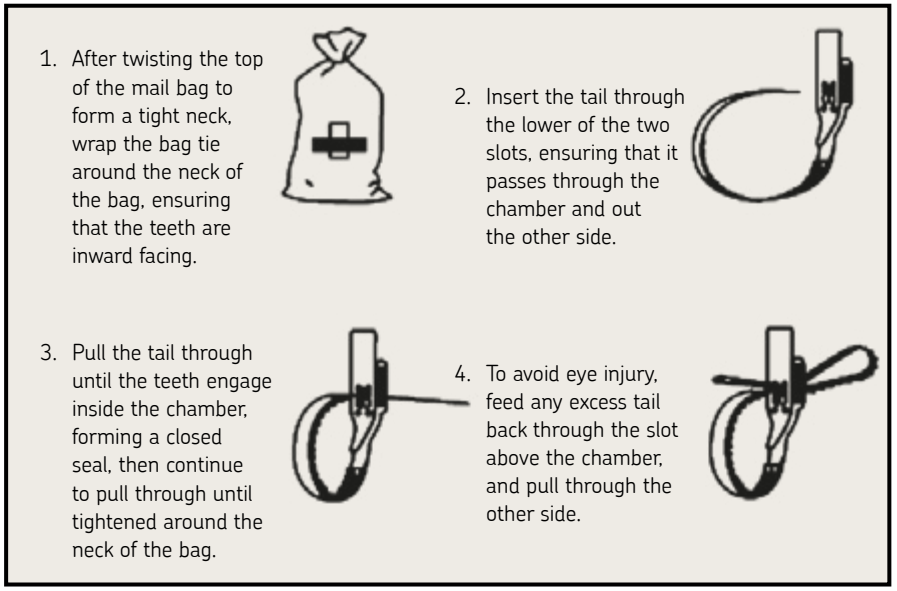
- Weigh at least 1.5kg
- Weigh no more than 11kg inclusive of bag, ties and labels
- Can still be securely sealed.

Then use black tamper proof Post Grip Bag ties (IDC01) to seal the bag. Please be careful not to use our standard black bag ties. You must then ensure the bag is sealed around its neck and not the loops.

Max Sort

Tying and bagging

1. After twisting the top of the mail bag to form a tight neck, wrap the bag tie around the neck of the bag, ensuring that the teeth are inward facing.
2. Insert the tail through the lower of the two slots, ensuring that it passes through the chamber and out the other side.
3. Pull the tail through until the teeth engage inside the chamber, forming a closed seal, then continue to pull through until tightened around the neck of the bag.
4. To avoid eye injury, feed any excess tail back through the slot above the chamber, and pull through the other side.



Labelling your mail

Destination labels

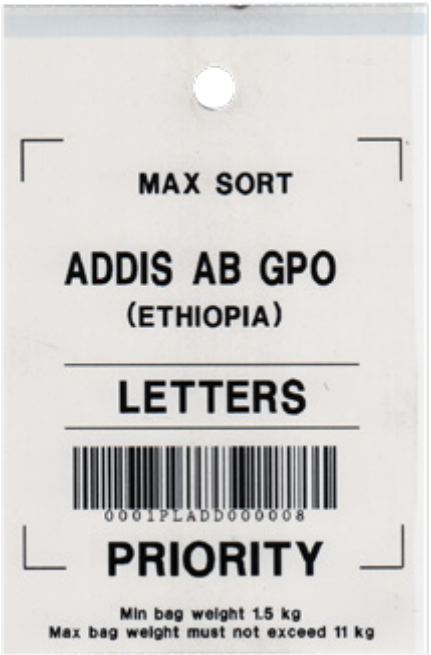
Please look in the Max Sort Sorting List for details of which destination label to attach to each mail bag.

It is essential that you use the correct destination label – they vary by service:

Marked PRIORITY

Marked STANDARD

Marked ECONOMY



Bulk posting

Bulk posting

Bulk postings

You must notify hwdc.forecast.group@royalmail.com 48 hours in advance for any of the following bulk postings:

Letters - if in a single posting there are:

→ More than 30,000 letters being sent worldwide

→ More than 20,000 letters being sent to a single country.

Large Letters - if in a single posting there are:

→ More than 10,000 Large Letters being sent worldwide

→ More than 5,000 Large Letters being sent to a single country.

Max Sort – if in a single posting you are sending: 500 bags to multiple countries or 50 bags to one country.

Failure to pre-advise postings of these quantities may result in a delay in the delivery of the mail.

Help, tips and FAQs

Help, tips and FAQs

Here is where you can find further information about International Business Mail.

How do I work out the costs in advance of a posting?

The International Business Mail Rate Card (which forms part of your agreement with us) can be found in the document library on the service website: royalmail.com/internationalbusinessmail

We've also created a pricing calculator for you to download free at: royalmail.com/internationalbusinessmail

When using Country Sort can I send mixed weight mailings?

Yes. You can send mixed weight items, so long as all of the items in a particular bag or tray are the same format of mail.

Can I send my mail unwrapped?

No. You must ensure that your mail is suitably wrapped, this not only provides your item a degree of protection whilst in transit but also helps prevent damage to the automated processes, through loose parts of your mail potentially becoming entangled.

Appendices

Appendix A: Addressing your Business Mail properly

Here are examples of how you should address your mail, depending on where you are sending it to:

Western Europe

Herr Franz Huber
Beethovenstrasse 12
1010 WIEN
AUSTRIA

M. Emile Dubois
Rue du Diamant 215
4800 VERVIERS
BELGIUM

Mr Thor Nielsen
Tietgensgade 137
8800 VIBORG
DENMARK

Mr Torben Raldorf
PO Box 100
COPENHAGEN
1004 VIBORG
DENMARK

Mr Asko Teirila
PO Box 511
39140 AKDENMAA
FINLAND

M. Robert MARIN
Rue de l'Eglise
Dunes
82340 AUVILLAR
FRANCE

Mme Marie PAGE
23 Rue de Grenell
75700 PARIS CEDEX
FRANCE

Mrs F Meier
Weberstr. 2
53113 BONN 1
GERMANY

Mr P Kunde
Langestr. 12
04103 LEIPZIG
GERMANY

Mr George Latsis
Alkamenou 37
117 80 ATHENS
GREECE

Mr Jon Jonsson
Einimel 80
107 REYKJAVIK
ICELAND

Mr Gerard Carey
45 O'Connell Street
DUBLIN 1
IRELAND

Ms M Sullivan
56 Broomfield
Macroom
Co. Cork
T37 F8HK
IRELAND

Sig. Giovanni Masci
via Garibaldi 27
47037 RIMINI RN
ITALY

M. Jaques MULLER
71 Route de Longway
4750 PETANGE
LUXEMBOURG

Mr J van Dieten
Morsstr 111
2312 BK LEIDEN
THE NETHERLANDS

Herr Hans Hansen
Svingen 22
9230 BEKKEHAUG
NORWAY

Senhor Carlos Manuel
Pereira
Av das A'Augsa Livres
Monte Trigo
7220-201 PORTEL
PORTUGAL

Rosalina Silva
R Conde Redondo 80
1150-006 LISBOA CODEX
PORTUGAL

Sra Ana Jimenez
Mimbreras 4
03201 ELCHE (Alicante)
SPAIN

Fru Inger Lilja
Vasavagen 3 4tr
582 20 LINKOPING
SWEDEN

M. Andre Perret
Schanzenstrasse 7
3030 BERNE
SWITZERLAND

Mail to France

When addressing mail to France, write the surname in CAPITAL letters.

Mail to Germany

Due to Germany's strict conditions for accepting mail, when addressing your items you must:

- Use the five-digit postcode
- Put the postcode before the town name
- Put the house number after the street name.

If the above is not carried out, your mail may be returned with no attempt at delivery.

Mail to the Republic of Ireland

Ireland now have a post code system which is made of seven alphanumeric characters below the name of the locality, with a space after the first three alphanumeric characters. More information on eircode.ie/

Appendix A: Addressing your Business Mail properly

Mail to the Rest of World

Mr J Brownhall
264 High Street
ALLAMBIE NSW 2100
AUSTRALIA

Sr. Ronaldo Ganclaves
Av Paulista 952, Apto 16
B VISTA
01311-300 Sâo Paulo – SP
BRAZIL

Dr Tzantcho Gantchev
Dimo Hadjikimov 6
1606 SOFIA
BULGARIA

M. Jen Durand
150 Rue Nepeau App 5
OTTAWA ON K1P 2P6
CANADA

Ana Car
Ilica 25
41 000 ZAGREB
CROATIA

M. Miroslav Ondevejka|
Fibichova 92
125 02 PRAGUE 3
CZECH REPUBLIC

M. Horvath LASZLO
Budapest
Kossuth u.7
1055
HUNGARY

Mr G Kaul
27 Rue Yafo
91999 JERUSALEM
ISRAEL

Mr Yushi Morimoto
504 Kasumigaseki 1 chome,
Chiyoda-ku
TOKYO 100
JAPAN

Mr Hong Kil-Dong
100 Sejongno, Jongno-gu
SEOUL 110-050
REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Mr Joaquim Cepeda
San Antonio Abad 120 – Piso 4
06820 CIUDAD DE MEXICO
MEXICO

Mr B Parker
64 Waterloo Quay
WELLINGTON 1
NEW ZEALAND

Mr Jan Kalinkowski
ul Cicha 5
62-806 KALISZ
POLAND

Mr Gheorghe Petraru
Bd Golescu 38
77113 BUCHAREST
ROMANIA

Ivanova I.S.
Oulitsa Gagagin 7
103375 MOSCOW
RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Mr Stevan Raukovic
Palmoticeva 2
11001 BELGRADE
SERBIA

(Items for the former Yugoslavia should be addressed to the Republic concerned).

Mr Tan Kay Hui
532 Chai Chee Road
SINGAPORE 1646
SINGAPORE

M Jan Kemr
Olsanka 18
820 01 BRATISLAVA 1
SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Mr Sudhorn Yoothong
13 / 54-26 Chaeng Waltana
Road
Bang Kehn
BANGKOK 10002
THAILAND

Mr Mazhar Alkan
Iskele Caddesi 35
06101 ANKARA
TURKEY

Mrs L Projivalsky
252001 KIEV
Prospect F Skaryna
UKRAINE

Mr Joe Engle
1612 Dexter Street
FORT WAYNE, IN, 46805
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mr Bill Harrison
347 L'Enfant Plaza SW
WASHINGTON, DC,
20260-6500
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Appendix B: Mail services and their product codes

Service Product Code

Service	Product Code
International Business Mail Mixed Zero Sort Premium	ZC1
International Business Mail Mixed Zero Sort Priority	WW1
International Business Mail Mixed Zero Sort Economy	WW3
International Business Mail Mixed Zero Sort Pri Machinable	WW4
International Business Mail Mixed Zero Sort Economy Machinable	WW6
International Business Mail Mixed Zone Sort Priority	OZ1
International Business Mail Mixed Zone Sort Economy	OZ3
International Business Mail Mixed Zone Sort Priority Machinable	OZ4
International Business Mail Mixed Zone Sort Economy Machinable	OZ6
International Business Mail Letters Zero Sort Priority	WP1
International Business Mail Letters Zero Sort Economy	WP3
International Business Mail Letters Zero Sort Priority Machinable	WP4
International Business Mail Letters Zero Sort Economy Machinable	WP6
International Business Mail Letters Zone Sort Priority	IP1
International Business Mail Letters Zone Sort Economy	IP3
International Business Mail Letters Zone Sort Priority Machinable	IP4
International Business Mail Letters Zone Sort Economy Machinable	IP6
International Business Mail Letters Country Sort High Volume Priority	DP1
International Business Mail Letters Country Sort High Volume Economy	DP3
International Business Mail Letters Country Sort Low Volume Priority	DP4
International Business Mail Letters Country Sort Low Volume Economy	DP6
International Business Mail Letters Max Sort Priority	PS5

Service	Product Code
International Business Mail Letters Max Sort Standard	PSA
International Business Mail Letters Max Sort Economy	PS6
International Business Mail Large Letter Zero Sorts Priority	WG1
International Business Mail Large Letter Zero Sort Economy	WG3
International Business Mail Large Letter Zero Sort Priority Machinable	WG4
International Business Mail Large Letter Zero Sort Economy Machinable	WG6
International Business Mail Large Letter Zone Sort Priority	IG1
International Business Mail Large Letter Zone Sort Economy	IG3
International Business Mail Large Letter Zone Sort Priority Machinable	IG4
International Business Mail Large Letter Zone Sort Economy Machinable	IG6
International Business Mail Large Letter Country Sort High Volume Priority	DG1
International Business Mail Large Letter Country Sort High Volume Economy	DG3
International Business Mail Large Letter Country Sort Low Volume Priority	DG4
International Business Mail Large Letter Country Sort Low Volume Economy	DG6
International Business Mail Large Letter Max Sort Priority	PS7
International Business Mail Large Letter Max Sort Standard	PSB
International Business Mail Large Letter Max Sort Economy	PS8

Appendix C: Addressing criteria for machinable mail

There are a variety of fonts you can use, though we recommend you use one from the list below wherever possible. We also recommend you regularly check the quality of your print output for clarity. If you have any doubts on either of these requirements, please contact your account manager.

Here are examples of recommended typefaces:

Arial 10 – 12pt regular
Avant Garde 11 – 15pt regular
Century Schoolbook 10 – 11pt roman and bold
Courier 10 – 15pt regular and bold
Franklin Gothic 11 – 14pt book
Geneva 10 – 12pt regular
Helvetica 12 – 15pt regular and bold

Typefaces with the following characteristics are also suitable:

- Size – Height: 2mm min; 7mm max. Width: 7mm max
- Dimension – minimum ratio of lower case height (b) to upper case height (a) of between 2:3 and 3:4. A ratio of width (c) to height (a) of approximately 2:3

- Consistency – each line of the address should be in the same typeface and size
- Quality – characters must be complete, clear, uniform and of high resolution, with individual stroke thickness of between 8% and 16% of the height of the character
- Contrast – there should be a contrast between the characters and the background on which they are printed of at least 50% (55% if it is to be read through a window)
- Positive Contrast or Inverse Printing (address block lighter than the background) is not permitted
- Character spacing – there should be a fixed pitch of between 10 and 12 characters per inch (or between 15 and 10 point size), with clear vertical gaps of at least 0.25mm between the extremities of adjacent characters.
- If you are using proportionally spaced text, please ensure you keep spacing of at least +0.75, as this significantly improves the rate at which addresses can be read
- Line spacing – allow uniform spacing between all lines of the address, of at least 1mm – 4mm. There must be no blank lines.

Appendix D: OCR specifications for Letters

Thickness

Items must be between 0.25mm and 5mm thick.

Paper weight

Envelopes: 70gsm minimum. Postcards: 200gsm minimum with a minimum thickness of 0.25mm. Postcards with a thickness of less than 0.25mm are not acceptable for OCR regardless of paper weight.

Flexibility

Items must be flexible enough to pass through automation equipment. Don't enclose inflexible objects such as coins, keys and thick card.

Material

You cannot use polythene, plastic or transparent items, or aperture envelopes (i.e. window envelopes with no plastic film).

Sealing

Seal each item well, taking care to avoid too much gum.

- The items must be securely sealed on all sides. Unwrapped catalogues, magazines etc. with or without tabs are not allowed
- Perforations and tear off slips are not acceptable.

Using window envelopes

If you intend your address to be read through a window, please follow these requirements:

- The window position must be at least 15mm from the left hand edge of the envelope, and at least 18mm from its bottom edge
- The maximum gloss value of the window material should be 150 when measured at 60° in accordance with ASTM 2457.

Standard test method for specular gloss of plastic films:

- The window haze should not exceed 75% in accordance with ASTM D1003 standard test method for haze of plastic films
- The item inside the envelope must fit securely, and not move around. The address must always be fully visible with the required clear zone around the address block. The maximum lateral movement of the largest insert should not exceed 20mm, unless the whole mailpiece is equal to or less than 2mm, in which case the maximum lateral movement is 30mm
- Windows should only appear on the front of the envelope (that is the same side as the address)
- The maximum number of windows on an envelope is two
- The total surface area of all windows on an envelope should not exceed 50% of the total surface area of the mailpiece
- The window should not infringe any of the clear zones on the mailpiece (template on page 47).

Appendix D: OCR specifications for Letters

Designing your items using colour and logos

Paper colour

If your items are to be delivered in envelopes, the most suitable colours for your envelopes are white, cream or buff. Other colours are possible, as long as they are light or pastel shades which contrast by at least 50% (55% where the address is read through a window) in tone with the address. Please do not use red or dark coloured envelopes, as it makes it difficult for our machines to read the address or codes.

Printing

The address must be darker than the paper. For example don't print the address in white on dark paper. Please do not print logos, watermark designs or text behind the address, as our machines cannot read against it. Printing or embossing of security backgrounds, if essential, should be faint, of uniform consistency and be on the inside of the envelope. The contrast factor must not be greater than 10%.

Advertising, logos and other devices

These can be used on the envelope as long as they do not fall into any of the clear zones. They must not look like an address or a barcode.

The address

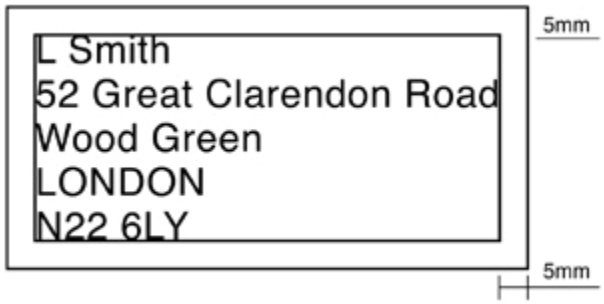
Please follow these guidelines:

- All lines of the address must be left justified
- The extremities of the address block must be at least 5mm away from the edge of the label or window
- Excessively skewed addresses cannot be read. OCR can only tolerate a maximum skew of plus or minus five degrees from the horizontal
- Punctuation must not be used in the address (for example, don't put commas or full stops at the end of lines).

The address block

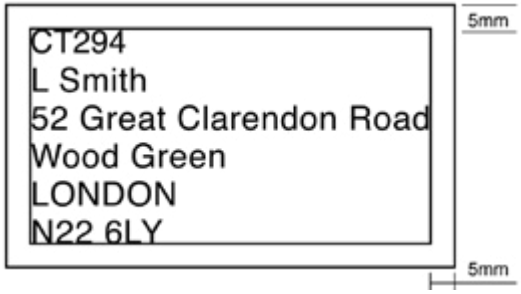
The address block is defined as an imaginary box which surrounds the address (including the addressee's name). There must be a 5mm clear zone around this block. The address block must be at least 2mm away from the edge of any label or envelope window provided that there is a total of 5mm clear area between the edge of the address block and any print, graphics or patterning on the envelope or any other surrounding material. A sample UK address is below.

If you want to print a reference number or code near the address, this must be printed either:

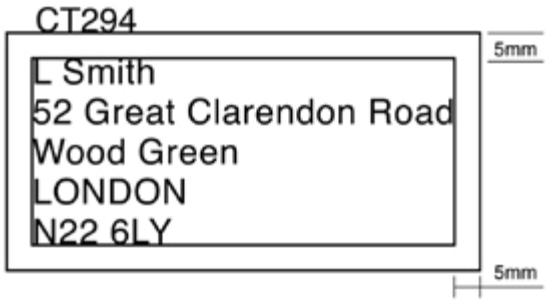


Appendix D: OCR specifications for Letters

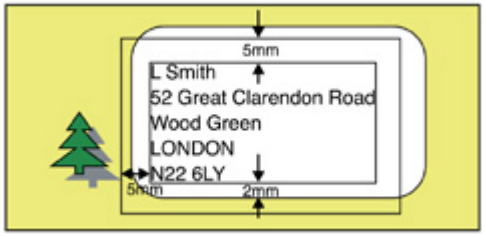
1. Within the address block as the top line of the address (and left justified to form part of the address).



or **2.** Outside the 5mm clear zone.



3. And here is the clear zone requirement with a window envelope (shaded area represents the envelope):



Note that whilst the window edge within the 5mm zone needs to be clear of print, graphics or patterning, it can be any colour, as long as it is clear and solid.

Areas you must not print in

You should leave the following areas clear of any markings. These areas are called 'clear zones', and are used by our machines to print and read codes on mail items and locate the address.

The address must not encroach into any of these clear zones:

1. 5mm around the address.

2. 18mm from the bottom edge and 130mm from the right edge.

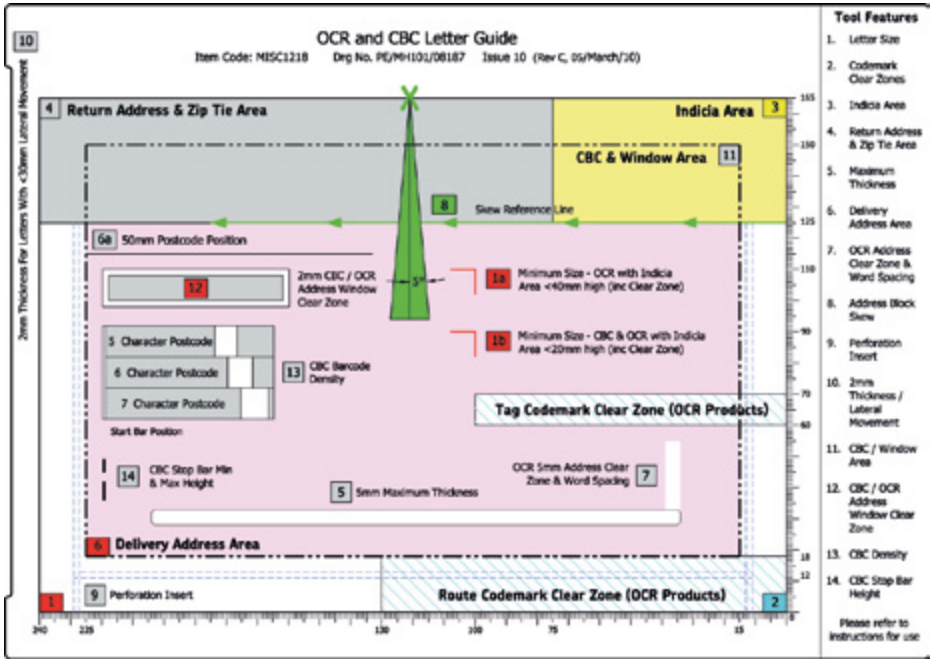
3. A zone 100mm from the right hand edge and 10mm high; with the zone's top edge starting 70mm from the bottom edge of the item.

In addition, no part of the address should fall within 40mm of the top of the mailpiece. Alternatively, the address may be within 40mm of the top of the envelope providing the whole of the country name is at least 50mm from the top edge. Please see the template below, which illustrates these clear zones. This is also available as a plastic template.

Appendix D: OCR specifications for Letters

Address format

Each address element must be on a separate line with the country included on the last line of the address and on its own:



Important

OCR machines can read anything up to 64 characters per line (including spaces). OCR cannot recognise computer zero (Ø) and ampersand (&).

Script type or italic typefaces also cannot be read.

Help and advice

Getting the clear zones correct is very important – if you need help please contact us at internationalservice@royalmail.com

Appendix E: Max Sort Sortation Options

It is possible to send Letters and Large Letters within the same Max Sort mail bag to certain countries and to send Letters, Large Letters and Parcels or any combination of these three to certain other countries.

The list of countries where these two options are possible is as follows:

Countries allowing for Letters and Large Letters to be mixed and bagged together		
Brazil	Latvia	Singapore
Chile	Lithuania	Slovak Republic
China	Malaysia	South Africa (Republic of)
Cyprus	Malta	South Korea (Republic of)
Czech Republic	Mexico	Taiwan
Estonia	Poland	Thailand
Hong Kong	Russian Federation	Turkey
Hungary	Saudi Arabia	United Arab Emirates

Countries allowing for Letters and Large Letters to be mixed together

When you mix Letters and Large Letters together in the same Max Sort mailbag you must apply the appropriate Letters format label to the mailbag and document the weight and quantity by country against the relevant International Business Mail Letters Max Sort product code.
E.g: I have 1 bag of mail containing a mixture of Letters and Large Letters being sent to Hong Kong via the Priority speed. I would apply the Priority speed, Letter format label to the mailbag and document the quantity and weight against Hong Kong under the International Business Mail Letters Priority product code.

Appendix E: Max Sort Sortation Options

Countries allowing all formats or any combination of formats to be mixed together					
Afghanistan	Bonaire	Congo (Dem. Rep of)	Gabon	Kenya	Mongolia
Albania	Bosnia Herzegovina	Congo (Rep of)	Gambia	Kiribati	Montenegro
Algeria	Botswana	Cook Islands	Georgia	Kosovo	Montserrat
Angola	British Indian Ocean Territory	Costa Rica	Ghana	Kuwait	Morocco
Anguilla	British Virgin Islands	Croatia	Greenland	Kyrgyzstan	Myanmar
Antigua / Barbuda	Brunei	Cuba	Grenada	Laos (People's Democratic Republic of)	Namibia
Argentina	Bulgaria	Curacao	Guadeloupe	Lebanon	Nauru Island
Armenia	Burkina Faso	Djibouti	Guatemala	Lesotho	Nepal
Aruba	Burundi	Dominica	Guinea	Liberia	New Caledonia
Ascension Island	Cambodia	Dominican Republic	Guinea-Bissau	Libya	Nicaragua
Azerbaijan	Cameroon	Ecuador	Guyana	Macao	Niger Republic
Bahamas	Cape Verde	Egypt	Haiti	Madagascar	Nigeria
Bahrain	Cayman Islands	El Salvador	Honduras	Mahore (also known as Mayotte)	Niue Island
Bangladesh	Central African Republic	Equatorial Guinea	India	Malawi	North Korea (People's Democratic Republic of)
Barbados	Ceuta	Eritrea	Indonesia	Maldives	North Macedonia
Belarus	Chad	Eswatini (previously Swaziland)	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Mali	Oman
Belize	Christmas Island (Indian Ocean)	Ethiopia	Iraq	Martinique	Pakistan
Benin	Christmas Island (Pacific Ocean)	Fiji	Ivory Coast (Cote D'Ivoire)	Mauritania	Palau (known also as Belau)
Bermuda	Colombia	French Guiana	Jamaica	Mauritius	Panama
Bhutan	Comoros Islands	French Polynesia	Jordan	Melilla	Papua New Guinea
Bolivia	Congo (Dem. Rep of)	French South Antarctic Territory	Kazakhstan	Moldova	Paraguay

Appendix E: Max Sort Sortation Options

Countries allowing all formats or any combination of formats to be mixed together					
Peru	Senegal	St Eustatius	Tajikistan	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus	Vietnam
Philippines	Serbia	St Helena	Tanzania	Turkmenistan	Wallis & Futuna Islands
Pitcairn Island	Seychelles	St Kitts & Nevis	Timor-Leste	Turks & Caicos Islands	Western Sahara
Puerto Rico	Sierra Leone	St Lucia	Togo	Uganda	Western Samoa
Qatar	Slovenia	St Maarten	Tokelau Islands	Ukraine	Yemen, Republic of
Reunion Island	Solomon Islands	St Vincent & The Grenadines	Tonga	Uruguay	Zambia
Romania	Somalia	Sudan	Trinidad & Tobago	Uzbekistan	Zimbabwe
Rwanda	South Sudan	Suriname	Tristan de Cunha	Vanuatu	
Sao Tome & Principe	Sri Lanka	Syria	Tunisia	Venezuela	

Countries allowing for all mail categories to be mixed together

When you are sending a mix of mail formats (Letters, Large Letters and Parcels) in a Max Sort mailbag you many use any format bag label. However, the format on the bag label must match the corresponding Max Sort product code.

E.g: I post three bags of mixed format to Vietnam weighing in total 20kg via the Priority speed. All three bags have Priority speed and Large Letter format on the bag labels. I must document this against the Business Mail Large Letters Max Sort Priority product code.

If I had two mixed format bags with Parcel format labels applied and one mixed bag of formats with Letters bag label applied then I would need to document the Letters labelled bag against the Max Sort Letters Priority product code and the two Parcels labelled bags against the Max Sort Parcels Priority product code.

Although correct at the date this booklet went to print, from time to time services may be added to, changed or withdrawn.

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